



VALLEY/ADAMS  
TRANSIT EXPANSION STUDY

FINAL REPORT

March 2006

Sponsored by

Idaho Transportation Department

Division of Public Transportation



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Transit Expansion Study Summary

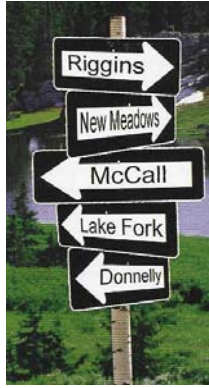
Introduction.....	1
Study Area Overview.....	2
Demographic Characteristics .....	3
Estimated Demand for Transit Services .....	6
Current Transit Services .....	9
Other Resort Communities' Experiences.....	13
Organization, Service and Funding Alternatives .....	16
Expanding Transit to Provide Regional Service.....	20
Next Steps .....	25

## APPENDICES

Appendix A	Needs Estimate Methods
Appendix B	Transit Options for Idaho's Heartland
	Powerpoint: November 2005

Cover Graphic from Remax Mountain West

For More Information Contact:  
Ostrander Consulting, Inc.  
3025 Umatilla Street, Unit 102  
Denver, CO 80211  
720-855-7404  
aostranderconsulting@msn.com



## VALLEY/ADAMS

### TRANSIT EXPANSION STUDY SUMMARY

#### *Where we are today.....*

Current Transportation Providers in District III include:

##### McCall Transit

- Operated by Treasure Valley Transit based in Nampa.
- Ridership increased from 16,100 in 2004 to 25,000 in 2005, a 56% increase.
- Annual Budget: \$215,000, includes Section 5311 grant + \$55,000 local match provided by City of McCall.

##### Tamarack Resort

- Operated by Tamarack Resort starting in December 2004.
- Daily service connecting Cascade, Donnelly, Lake Fork, Resort and McCall. For the three months December to February, ridership doubled from 4,026 in 2005 to 8,016 in 2006. **Service has been voluntarily open to the general public.**
- Also provides on-site transfer from parking to activity centers.

##### Brundage Mountain Resort

Services include McCall Shuttle Bus, Boise Coach, West Valley

##### Social Service Providers

Senior Centers in McCall, New Meadows Cascade, Council

##### Other/Charter

Harlow Bus Sales/Charter Services

A+ Specialty Transportation, Prompt Delivery and Transportation

##### Intercity Connections

Northwest Stage Lines

#### *What is the potential need.....*

The potential for developing transit alternatives for residents, workers, and visitors to Valley and Adams County is excellent.

- Need for general public estimated at 30,900 annual trips.
- Work Trips estimated at 62,100 annual trips.
- Total demand of 93,000 passenger trips per year.
- Current service provides approximately 36% of the total demand.

### ***What we want to happen in the next two years.....***

Three short-term opportunities to expand transit service in the study area have been identified. The first is coordinate current services between Cascade/Tamarack/McCall and the local service provided by TVT in McCall. The second is to continue coordinated services in Valley County and partner with TVT to expand this service to Adams County. The third is to increase service to the City of McCall.

#### ***Coordinate Tamarack Resort with McCall Transit***

Tamarack Resort and TVT are developing a partnership that would open all Tamarack transit services to the general public and coordinate stops and schedules with McCall Transit service. No new funding is needed for this improvement. Future options would be to develop an agreement for mutual operations, the funds budgeted by Tamarack Resort would be available as a local match to leverage federal funding from the Section 5311 program. This would potentially increase the amount of service that could be provided. The priority objective of these coordinated services would be to provide employees and guests to communities along Highway 55 with access to not only Tamarack Resort, but also worksites and activities in McCall. While the immediate opportunity is to develop a partnership with Tamarack Resort, Brundage Ski Resort may also be a potential partner. Management reorganization limited the opportunity for Brundage to participate in this initial effort.

#### ***Add Adams County Connector Service***

Adams County service would be an expansion of McCall Transit and consist of two morning commuter runs from New Meadows to McCall and Donnelly and two afternoon/evening return runs. These would coordinate with the commuter runs from Cascade to Donnelly and McCall operated by Tamarack. Grant funding to support operation of New Meadows/McCall/Donnelly service has been requested.

#### ***Expanded Service in McCall***

McCall Transit currently provides an hour loop connecting the west and east sides of town crossing through the main Downtown shopping and business community twice per hour. An option to expand service would be to add a second vehicle to the system. The two vehicles would shorten the ride time with the frequency between vehicles reduced to the east and west sides to thirty minutes.

Estimated cost for this additional bus would be approximately \$100,000 annually with an estimated local match requirement of \$50,000. The addition of the second vehicle would extend opportunities to provide transit service to accommodate local cultural centers and events such as the historic settlement at Roseberry housing the Valley County Historical Museum.

*What has been accomplished to date.....*

Time	Partner:	Tasks:	Update as of March 2006
Jan- June 2006	McCall Transit/TVT	<p>Coordinate existing transit schedules with Tamarack/Other Resorts. (Meeting Dec. 8<sup>th</sup> for this task)</p> <p>Develop budget for adding one vehicle for Adams Connector. Would provide two morning/two afternoon commuter runs.</p> <p>Discuss possible expansion of service in McCall; reduce loop to 1/2 hour. Develop budget for McCall Council review.</p> <p>Submit Section 5311 grant application for FFY 2006-07 to incorporate expanded service.</p>	<p>Schedules have been coordinated, specifically to meet in McCall at Super 8.</p> <p>TVT submitted expanded service as part of 2007 Grant Request.</p> <p>First issue to address: City of McCall needs to increase local match from \$55,000 to \$80,000 to support current service levels. Submitted/presented to ITD February 23, 2006</p>
	Tamarack Resort Other Resorts	<p>Develop information about cost to operate current service and potential for coordinating with expanded service.</p> <p>Extend coordination to other resorts/partners as identified.</p>	<p>Current service between Cascade, Donnelley Lake Fork and Tamarack open to general public. Two morning/two afternoon runs. <u>Tamarack Resort averaging 42 riders per day.</u></p>
	ITD/ Public Transportation	<p>Identify surplus Section 5311 funding available for FFY 2005-06.</p> <p>Resolve working relationship of McCall/TVT and Tamarack; develop protocol to use coordinated service as source of matching funds.</p> <p>Review Grant Application for FFY 2006-07 funding for increased service levels.</p>	<p>Surplus funds must be coordinated with: TVT/Mountain Home: City Council will decide by June if local match available to continue service. Valley Ride/Parma Service: Service set to start by April 1; delayed to October Consortium Agreement under review. Would coordinate TVT and Tamarack service for general public, making Tamarack shuttle funds eligible as local match. Anticipate resolution by August 2006</p>
	VAPP	<p>Continue dialogue between cities/county to identify transit needs. Identify additional partnerships/sources of local match.</p>	<p><b>Important to continue to consider additional sources of local match funds.</b> <b>Monitor/discuss statewide efforts to implement Rural Transit Authority with revenue options.</b></p>

## INTRODUCTION

Following a period of limited economic activity, Valley and Adams Counties are experiencing the exhilaration and impact of rapid growth associated with significant new resort developments. The master plan for Tamarack Resort includes year-round activities served by three villages, a golf course, and a large residential community with lift-served skiing inaugurated in winter of 2004. Nearby Brundage Mountain Resort is expanding to provide a two-mountain ski experience. Throughout Valley and Adams Counties, the towns of McCall, Cascade, Donnelly, Meadows, New Meadows and Council are enjoying a similar renaissance. Over the past three years, the Valley County Economic Development Council reports that in addition to resort development, ten new businesses have generated 121 new jobs with a capital investment of \$14 million.

Tourism, commerce and local residents are all impacted by this expansion. It is timely that various local entities consider options to manage highway and road systems as a strategy to preserve and enhance the local environment and community character - important to both residents and visitors. The purpose of this expansion study is to identify the viability of integrating transit alternatives into the management of mobility throughout the region and to suggest specific projects to expand public transit in Valley and Adams Counties.

This expansion study identifies the need for transit services for the general public as well as for various work sites and activity centers, such as ski and lodging developments, local senior organizations, and other community-based services. It also inventories current transit services. The range of transit alternatives being used successfully by other resort communities is presented, funding options are identified, and a range of alternative transit services developed and evaluated.

Components addressed include:

- Study Area Overview
- Demographic Characteristics that Influence Potential Ridership
  - Demographics
  - Employment
  - Commuter Travel Patterns
- Estimated Demand for Transit Service
- Current Transit Services
- Other Resort Communities' Experiences
- Review of Funding Alternatives to Provide Transit Services

## STUDY AREA OVERVIEW

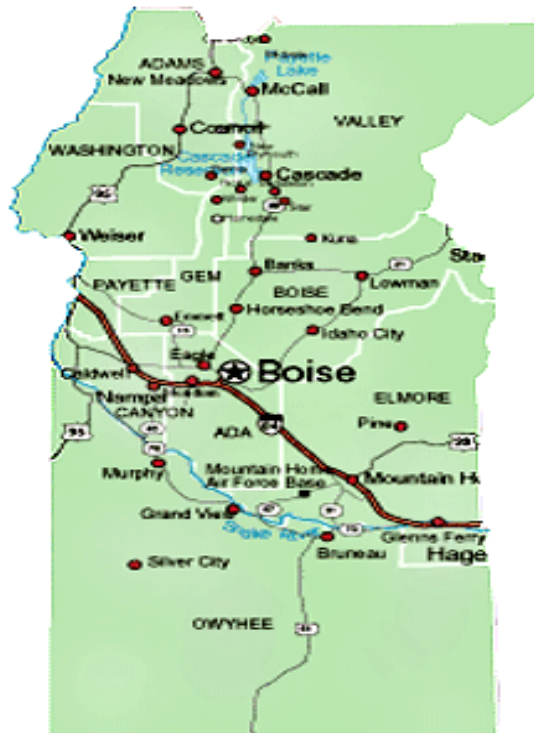
Valley and Adams Counties are located north of Boise in what is often termed Idaho's Heartland. Dramatic mountains nestle high country valleys that serve as home for most of the residents. Tourists and second homeowners coming to enjoy the recreational and natural resources of the area have substantially replaced the traditional economic pursuits of ranching, logging and mining as the cornerstones of the regional economy.

While Valley County ranks 30<sup>th</sup> among Idaho's 44 counties in population, it is the fifth largest in total area, covering over 3,733 square miles. Cascade is the county seat. Other larger towns include McCall and Donnelly. Population in 2005 was estimated by Idaho Power to be 8,592, a 12% increase since Census 2000 reported a population of 7,651.

Adams County, to the west of Valley County, covers over 1,370 square miles. Council is the county seat. The largest town is New Meadows. Population in 2005 was estimated by Idaho Power to be 3,534, a 1.7% increase since Census 2000 reported a population of 3,476.

The Valley/Adams County area is in Idaho Transportation Department District III. A map of this Idaho area is shown below.

ITD DISTRICT III



## DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

A key factor in analyzing the needs for transit in a community is an understanding of the population characteristics of groups that would tend to depend on transportation alternatives to the automobile.

Transit dependent persons are generally defined as those individuals who have characteristics that prevent them from driving. Public transit often becomes the primary motorized form of transportation available to them. These population segments include elderly, youth, and persons with mobility limitations. The elderly are a primary transit rider group based on limited income and/or deteriorating health limiting the ability to drive. In both counties, the population tends to be older versus other Idaho communities: The statewide average for 65 years and older is 11.3%; for Adams and Valley Counties, 14% of the population is older than 65.

County:	Adams	Valley	Total
Data:			
Square Miles	1,370	3,733	5,103
County Seat	Council	Cascade	
Year Founded	1911	1917	
Total Population	3,476	7,970	11,446
Population by Age		-	
0-4 years	145	319	464
5 to 20 years	783	1,753	2,536
21 to 64 years	1,980	4,702	6,682
65 and over	568	1,196	1,764
Mobility Limited Population			-
16 to 64 years	386	611	997
65 and over	380	492	872

Source: Census 2000, updated by Idaho Commerce and Labor, November 2005

State and county planning organizations have had difficulty updating demographic data to report the tremendous growth over the past several years. Recent updates to city and town growth were prepared by the Idaho Commerce and Labor Department and reported in June 2005. This estimate may be conservative. Both Idaho Power data and local staff reported more increases to population on both a city and county level.



City/Town	2000	2004	Change
Council	816	733	-10%
New Meadows	533	484	-9%
McCall	2084	2304	11%
Cascade	997	977	-2%
Donnelly	138	132	-4%

Population of Idaho City/Counties, Idaho Commerce and Labor, June 2005

Without exception, the feedback from various city administrations and advisory group participants agree that this population data understates the actual growth in the area.

Another factor influencing the need for a transit alternative in a community is the employees' commute to the workplace. Based on 2005 population estimate reported in Housing Needs Assessment, Rees Consulting, Inc., the number of residents commuting between the counties was identified; this estimate is considered "low" based on significant economic activity over the past six months.

	Where Residents of		Where Workers in	
	Valley County Work		Valley County Live	
Valley	3,067	88.4%	3,067	89.2%
Adams	110	3.2%	175	5.1%
Other	292	8.4%	197	5.7%
	3,469		3,439	

	Where Residents of		Where Workers in	
	Adams County Work		Adams County Live	
Adams	1,027	74.7%	1,027	84.9%
Valley	175	12.7%	110	9.1%
Other	172	12.5%	72	6.0%
	1,374		1,209	

Census 2000, Housing Needs Assessment, Rees Consulting, Inc.

In 2000, over 89% of Valley County residents lived and worked in the county, while nearly 85% of Adams County residents lived and worked in their home county. The recent construction boom has clearly increased the number of workers traveling into the county from areas outside the region. Low-wage employees unable to find housing in Valley County are fueling the commute from Adams County. Additionally, the Housing Needs Assessment reported a significant number of new employees who, unable to find housing in Valley County, have moved to New Meadows. Builders estimate that 80% to 90% of their workers are from outside the area, commuting home on the weekends.

Numerous negative consequences associated with a labor force that must commute include:

- Leakage – paycheck spent outside area
- Employment problems – inclement weather, car problems
- Parking – additional parking at workplace
- Family/Community – time spent commuting limiting participation
- Housing Affordability – expense of commuting limits housing expenditures
- Traffic Congestions – especially during peak hours

Access to transit as an alternative to the single occupant vehicle is one solution to this problem.

## **ESTIMATED DEMAND FOR TRANSIT SERVICES**

Transit planners use a variety of methods to estimate demand for transit services. These include both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative methods are mathematical models based on observed ridership in similar communities. Several of these models have been designed specifically for rural areas and small communities. These techniques provide a ballpark estimate of ridership if effective transit services are provided.

In addition to the quantitative techniques to identify potential ridership, it is equally useful to look at some qualitative factors that could influence the need for transit services. Local stakeholders are often able to identify local situations and provide relevant insight to the community activities that influence the need for transit services.

Actual ridership will depend on the ability to provide effective service as well as the demand. For transit services to meet the demand, they must operate frequently and provide workable connections between trip origins and destinations. Because of geographic or financial constraints, the ability to provide viable transit services varies with each area. As with many community services, it is unrealistic to anticipate that all the identified need will be provided.

A good “starting point” for demand analysis is to estimate the demand for transit and compare that with current services, thereby determining the total unmet transit needs.

### Quantitative Analysis

Demographic data can be used to analyze community mobility needs. Two methods were selected to estimate ridership for Valley and Adams Counties.

- Survey Research Trip Method: Developed in 1992 for Mesa County, CO, this method provides separate projections for general, elderly, and mobility limited populations. Factors developed for this model reflect the rural/small urban characteristics of study area.
- R & R Method: Relies on mobility factors reported in the Census 2000. This method groups the elderly and mobility limited populations. Based on the relatively constant demographic profile in study area, this method is appropriate.
- Work Trip Estimate: Relies on census data to establish percentage of all work trips taken on public transit. In this instance, statewide data was applied.

Detailed information, including census data factors and formulas used to calculate the transit demand for the study area is available in Appendix A. The standard for reporting transit ridership is as a one-way trip. A round-trip, for example a trip to a medical appointment and back home, would be recorded as two one-way trips.

General Public Ridership Estimate

Ridership Estimate:	Adams	Valley	Total
<b>R and R Method Total</b>	<b>5,958</b>	<b>12,899</b>	<b>18,857</b>
General Population	2,142	5,671	7,813
Elderly/Disabled	3,816	7,228	11,044
<b>Survey Method Total</b>	<b>16,211</b>	<b>26,716</b>	<b>42,927</b>
General Population	2,373	5,829	8,202
Elderly Population	417	1,562	1,980
Disabled Population	13,420	19,325	32,745
<b>Average One-Way Passenger Trips</b>	<b>11,084</b>	<b>19,807</b>	<b>30,892</b>

Based on the average of these two models, the average number of one-way passenger trips generated from Adams County is 11,084 with 19,807 trips from Valley County. The total estimate is just over 31,000 one-way passenger trips per year.

The need for work-trips in the study area has been clearly identified. The Employee Transit Use Method is an accepted model to identify potential riders commuting to the workplace. The ridership estimate was limited to Valley County employment statistics reported by the Idaho Commerce and Labor Department in November 2005, with a total employment of 4,147 identified.

Work Trips Ridership Estimate

Total Employment	4,147		
Percent Using Transit	0.8%	3%	6%
Total Employee Riders	33	124	249
Trips/Day	2	2	2
Work Days	250	250	250
Total One-Way Trips	16,588	62,205	124,410

Qualitative Analysis

Two aspects of the census population data may underestimate the need for transit in the study area. The first is the difficulty in updating the demographic data accurately given the tremendous economic and population growth in the area. The Valley County Economic Development Council reported that development is not limited to resort activities; in the past three years, new ten businesses generated 121 new jobs with a capital investment of \$14 million. This growth will also increase the need for work related trips.

The second difficulty in estimating transit need is identifying the demand based on significant summer and winter visitors. Population data does not reflect the visitor that will often use transit to access resort activities. Resort communities must address

the need to provide services to a fluctuating population. This phenomenon impacts all municipal services such as water, police and fire protection, etc. While many resorts were originally developed for winter sports, recent trends to year round activities – biking, hiking etc. – have developed two peak seasons. Summer and winter seasons are separated by a shoulder or “mud” season. Many resort areas use the “peak population” estimate, the census population plus visitors/second-home average occupancy, to develop estimate of service needs.

In order to identify the number of seasonal visitors, the Blaine County Economic Analysis (Dean Runyan Associates, 2001) was used to estimate the impact on overall population. This study found that short-term and second homeowners account for 33% of the total population. Assuming this estimate is consistent to the Valley/Adams study area, the resident population and seasonal visitor population could be estimated:

<u>Year Round</u>		<u>Seasonal</u>		<u>Total</u>
67%		33%		100%
18,857	+	9,287	=	28,145

In terms of transit ridership, this information could be used to develop an estimate of potential transit ridership. Examples of successful resort transit services confirm that it is important to consider both seasonal and resident populations when developing transit services.

Peer Group Comparison  
Riders per Peak Population

Est. Resident + Visitor Pop.	Location	Annual Riders	Annual Riders/ Population
28,145	Valley/Adams 1	25,000 (TVT) 14,000 (Tamarack)	2
3,315	Town of Telluride	176,000	53
14,649	Steamboat Springs	941,800	64
3,590	Town of Breckenridge	325,000	91

Summary

Based on updated Census 2000 demographics of the general public, the elderly, and persons with mobility limitations, 30,900 one-way passenger trips per year could be generated. In addition, the need for transit to various work sites is significant. If 3% of this potential ridership were achieved, an additional 62,100 one-way trips per year would be required, producing a total annual demand for 93,000 trips.

In 2005, the actual ridership on McCall Transit and Tamarack Resort transit was 34,600 or 36% of the demand. The potential for successfully expanding transit service in the study area is supported by two factors, the strong growth in ridership on McCall Transit and Tamarack Resort transit as well as the identified need for work related transit trips.

## CURRENT TRANSIT SERVICES

Current Transportation Providers in District III include:

- McCall Transit
- Tamarack Resort
- Brundage Mountain Resort
  - McCall Shuttle Bus
  - Boise Coach
  - West Valley
- Social Service Providers
  - Cascade Senior Center
  - Council Senior Center
  - McCall Senior Citizens Center
  - New Meadows Senior Citizens Center
- Other/Charter
  - Harlow's Bus Sales/Charter Services
  - A+ Specialty Transportation
  - Prompt Delivery and Transportation, Inc.
- Intercity Connections
  - Northwest Stage Lines

### McCall Transit

McCall Transit has been providing transit service to the City of McCall since June 2003. The increase in ridership has been significant, increasing 54% from 16,138 riders in 2004, the first full year of operations, to an estimated 25,000 riders in 2005. The bus serves local residents and visitors alike and based on this growth, indications are that the service will continue to grow.

Month	2003	2004	2005	% Increase '04 to '05
Jan		861	2,010	133%
Feb		784	1,777	127%
Mar		943	1,707	81%
Apr		793	1,647	108%
May		894	1,639	83%
Jun	702	1,572	1,299	-17%
Jul	1,476	2,129	3,710	74%
Aug	1,254	2,003	2,799	40%
Sep	873	1,238	1,871	51%
Oct	646	1,488	2,052	38%
Nov	678	1,656	1,931	17%
Dec	645	1,777	2,055	40%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,274</b>	<b>16,138</b>	<b>24,497</b>	<b>52%</b>

Within the community, McCall Transit provides a needed service to the general public, including persons with mobility limitations, seniors, and school age children during the summer. Visitors take advantage of McCall Transit, with guests from local hotels and airport fly-in events making up a portion of the nearly 26,000 rides in 2005.

Advertised as a fixed route with flag stop system, McCall Transit offers an extensive service route, traveling to most residential/commercial centers of town. A complete loop takes one hour, collecting riders at designated stops. Operating with one vehicle provides service from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm, seven days per week.

Treasure Valley Transit (TVT), a non-profit organization providing transit services to several rural towns in Idaho, operates McCall Transit. Based in Nampa, TVT provides service under contracts for WITCO and private schools. In addition, Medicaid patients can contact TVT for transportation to medical appointments. TVT currently operates Mountain Home Community Transit serving Mountain Home and the nearby Air Force Base as a pilot project. Continuation of this service depends on the ability of local partners, primarily Mountain Home, to provide the local match required by the FTA Section 5311 grant program.

McCall Transit operates on an annual budget estimated at \$215,000 including capital, operations, and administration with four part-time employees assigned to McCall Transit. The City of McCall provides a local match of \$55,000 to support operations. The additional local match is being provided on the short-term from other funding sources. The issue of local match support will need to be addressed over the next funding years. One option to offset the additional funding needs for this service would be advertising revenue. The City of McCall has agreed to allow TVT to solicit advertisements on the buses and these funds are expected to be available in 2006.

### Tamarack Resort

Operated by Tamarack Resort, this shuttle is primarily for employees but is open to the general public. Tamarack has extended a policy of offering all rides fare-free through spring of 2006. Tamarack Resort provides two trips daily connecting Cascade, Donnelly, Lake Fork and McCall with the Resort. This service has been in operation since December 2004.

Tamarack Transit Services: As of August 1, 2005  
(From automated phone information)

Valley County Service		
McCall	Lv. 6:15, 8 am Ret. 5:45 pm	Seven Day/Week \$3.00
Lake Fork	Lv. 6:25, 8:10 am Ret. 5:45 pm	"
Donnelly/ Country Store	Lv. 6:35, 8:20 am Ret. 5:45 pm	"
Cascade/Ashley Inn	Lv. 6:15, 8 am Ret. 5:45 pm	"
Dial-a-Ride	7 am to 8 pm	Within Resort

The schedule varies seasonally with ridership of 9,200 for the nine month through August. The shuttle also serves Boise/Tamarack and offers Kids Kamp trips. Service is appropriately tailored to serve worker's shifts. A positive start-up indicates willingness of workers to use this service on a continued basis.

Services Provided: December 2004 to August 2005

	McCall		Cascade		Boise		Kids Kamp		Total
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	McCall	Cascade	
Dec	194	161	190	99	49	49			742
Jan	506	469	429	185	27	25			1,641
Feb	547	383	407	194	60	60			1,651
Mar	501	326	357	197	23	2			1,406
Apr	325	246	243	174	74	73			1,135
May	247	150	151	107					655
June	275	175	166	151			204	1	972
July	339	194	226	183			269	75	1,286
Aug	287	135	209	156			151	82	1,020
	3,221	2,239	2,378	1,446	233	209	624	158	
Total:		5,460		3,824		442		782	10,508
							Annualized		14,000

Drivers are full-time employees of the resort with a benefit package. (TVT drivers are part-time with no benefits, a significant difference)

### Brundage Mountain Resort

Located eight miles from McCall, Brundage Mountain Resort offers year-round activities to visitors, from skiing to rafting. Brundage Mountain Resort utilizes charter bus operators to provide three services. The schedule for these services for the 2004-05 season includes:

#### *McCall Shuttle Bus*

To serve its winter visitors, especially skiers, the resort has established a shuttle that offers service from McCall to Brundage with stops at the Super 8, Hunt Lodge, Best Western, Toll Station, and Whitetail for \$5.00 per rider one way or round-trip. The ride from the Super 8 to Brundage Mountain takes 45 minutes. From December 22 to January 2, service is every day, and then changes to every weekend and three-day holiday weekend through February 27.

#### *Boise*

In order to bring visitors to Brundage Mountain from Boise, Brundage Mountain Resort offers coach service every Saturday and Sunday January through February. Cost is \$20 round trip for same day return and \$30 for a ride up on Saturday returning on Sunday evening. The shuttle departs the



Boise Wal-Mart parking lot location at 7:00 am with arrival at Brundage Mountain at 9:30 am. The return departure is at 4:30 pm, arriving back at Wal-Mart at 7:30 pm.

#### West Valley

Starting Christmas weekend and running through December 31, a bus will offered service from Nampa, Caldwell and Meridian. The Nampa departure is from Nampa High School at 7:00 am, from Caldwell at Caldwell High School at 7:00 am and from Meridian at Meridian High School at 7:00 am. A bus will pick up in Horseshoe Bend at the Chevron station on Hwy 55 between 7:30 and 7:45 and Banks at Banks Café at approximately 8:10.

Due to management changes, Brundage Resort was not able to participate in the study process. However, they have indicated an interest in participating in the future.

#### Social Service Providers

Senior centers in Cascade, Council, McCall and New Meadows offer valuable service to clients for transportation to medical appointments, shopping, and meals at the local senior centers, as well as other special events. The vans or cutaway buses used for these services are funded through the FTA Section 5310 grant program providing capital funding to support transit services for rural and small urban senior activities.

#### Other/Charter Services

Other charter services offer transportation service to visitors and residents of the area. Harlow's Bus Sales/Charter Services, A+ Specialty Transportation and Prompt Delivery and Transportation, Inc. may all be contacted by individuals to schedule service and to obtain fare information.

#### Intercity Bus

Northwest Stage Line provides an intercity connection through US highway 55 once per day on the following schedule:

4:15P	Riggins	12:50P
4:55P	New Meadows	12:05P
5:20P	McCall	11:45A
6:00P	Cascade	11:00A
7:00P	Horseshoe Bend	9:45A
7:45P	<b>Boise</b>	9:15A

Ridership from/to Lewiston from Boise is about 250-300 per month total. Without an intercity grant, this service may disappear as losses are regularly occurring.

## OTHER RESORT COMMUNITIES' EXPERIENCES

Public transportation can play a significant role in mountain resort communities by:

- reducing reliance on the automobile,
- mitigating the impact of the automobile on the character that residents and visitors cherish,
- minimizing peak-hour congestion in major travel corridors, and
- supporting the work force needed to maintain economic vitality

Several resorts facing similar impacts from resort development have successfully developed transit systems. A review of Colorado resort communities that provide transit reveal the wide-range of size and service delivery formats available.

Operating Statistics:					
		Annual Passenger	Service	Revenue	Total Op. Budget
	Resort Community	Trips	Hours	Miles	(\$M)
Regional	RFTA	3,567,900	157,100	2,812,800	\$ 12.0
Regional	Eagle County RTA	801,500	51,900	1,377,000	\$ 5.7
Population					
23,548	Summit Stage	1,500,000	65,500	1,120,000	\$ 3.8
13,922	Durango Lift	214,500	23,900	332,400	\$ 0.6
9,815	Steamboat Springs	941,800	34,800	539,600	\$ 1.7
5,914	City of Aspen	1,058,900	50,400	485,200	\$ 2.6
4,531	Town of Vail	3,200,000	61,000	620,000	\$ 2.6
2,405	Breckenridge	325,000	28,800	268,000	\$ 1.1
2,221	Town of Telluride	176,000	12,400	138,000	\$ 0.5
1,822	Snowmass Village	652,800	34,900	431,200	\$ 1.4
1,529	Mountain Express	507,000	12,500	143,000	\$ 0.8
Performance Measures:					
		Section 5311	Operated By	Riders/ Service Hr.	Op. \$/ Rider
	Resort Community				
Regional	RFTA	Y	RTA	23	\$ 3.36
Regional	Eagle County RTA	N	RTA	15	\$ 7.11
Population					
23,548	Summit Stage	Y	County	23	\$ 2.53
13,922	Durango Lift	Y	City	9	\$ 2.80
9,815	Steamboat Springs	Y	City	27	\$ 1.81
5,914	City of Aspen	N	City	21	\$ 2.46
4,531	Town of Vail	N	City	52	\$ 0.81
2,405	Breckenridge	Y	City	11	\$ 3.38
2,221	Town of Telluride	N	City	14	\$ 2.84
1,822	Snowmass Village	Y	City	19	\$ 2.14
1,529	Mountain Express	Y	City	41	\$ 1.58

Several key success stories have been identified and illustrate the wide-range of opportunities to provide transit in a resort community.



The Southern Teton Area Rapid Transit system is a partnership of the Town of Jackson and Teton County, Wyoming. Winter service is provided seven days a week, with service five days a week during the summer. Routes include a town shuttle providing circulator service between the lodging and central town shops and restaurants. A fixed route connects downtown Jackson with Teton Village. A Worker Special – express service between Victor, Idaho and the Town of Jackson – provides transit for workers. Annual ridership is 480,000 riders supported by a budget of \$1.6M.



The Summit Stage is a countywide transit authority operating in Summit County, Colorado. Partners in this authority include the Towns of Breckenridge, Frisco and Silverthorne along with the privately held resorts of Keystone, Copper Mountain, Arapahoe Basin, and Breckenridge. Service is provided seven days a week between the hours of 6 AM and 2 AM. Routes include four town-to-town fixed routes meeting at a central transfer station with an expansive park and ride and an enclosed terminal. Mountain Mobility provides service for disabled riders, as well as senior center trips. Annual ridership is 1.5M riders supported by a budget of \$3.8M.

## KART

The Town of Ketchum operates Ketchum Area Transit (KART). Peak Bus is operated by Blaine County in Idaho. Partners in KART include Sun Valley and Ketchum. During the winter, a full schedule is provided with limited service in the summer. Routes include the KART service connecting the towns with the ski slopes. The Peak Bus provides express service between the towns of Ketchum and Hailey. Annual ridership is approximately 400,000 supported by a budget of \$1.0M. Recent efforts are moving toward more integrated regional service. The KART Board will be reorganized effective May 2006 to extend transit the length of the Wood River Valley and expand public transit services to the residents and visitors to the resort communities year round.



Breckenridge Free Ride is an evolving partnership of the Town of Breckenridge and the privately owned Breckenridge Ski Resort. Historically, each organization operated independently. Efforts to consolidate the two services were undertaken two years ago with the anticipated culmination of a fully integrated service to coincide with the opening of a new gondola system to a primary ski mountain. Currently service includes a town circulator, fixed route to affordable housing locations, and parking shuttles. Annual ridership is 325,000 riders supported by a budget of \$1.1M.

## ORGANIZATION, SERVICE AND FUNDING ALTERNATIVES

### Organization Alternatives

Eight institutional alternatives have been identified as commonly used to manage rural transit services.

- Department of Local Government
- Intergovernmental Transit Agency
- Metropolitan District
- Regional Service Authority
- Rural Transportation Authority
- Public-Private Partnership
- Private, Non-Profit Corporation
- Private, For-Profit Corporation

### Service Type

#### *Fixed Route, Fixed Schedule*

Transit vehicle travels a pre-established route. Passengers are picked up or dropped off at predesignated locations along the route. Customers board a vehicle at specified times on a schedule established by the transit agency.

#### *Commuter Route, Fixed Schedule – Subscription Services*

Fixed route operating with designated stops primarily operated for employee destinations and times, usually over long distances rather than short fixed route. Not subject to ADA compliance.

#### *Fixed Route, Flexible Schedule*

Transit vehicle travels a pre-established route. Passengers are picked up or dropped off at predesignated locations along the route. Schedule changes are permitted with short notice to reflect changing circumstances.

#### *Intercity Fixed Route, Fixed Schedule*

Transit vehicle travels a pre-established route. Passengers are picked up or dropped off at predesignated location along the route. Customers board a vehicle at specified times on a schedule established by transit agency. Most serve to make connections with airport, other intercity destinations with urban populations of 5,000 or more. Feeder services to intercity connections are included.

#### *Variable Route, Fixed Schedule*

*Route Deviation:* A vehicle travels a basic fixed route picking up passengers anywhere along the route and will deviate a few blocks from the fixed route to pick up or deliver passengers requiring curb-to-curb service. *Point Deviation:* A vehicle stops at specified checkpoints (shopping centers, libraries, etc.) at specified times but travels a flexible route between these points to serve specific customer requests for curbside pick-up/delivery. Schedules are established by the transportation agency.

*Demand Responsive*

Demand Responsive service is based on passenger request. A passenger contacts a scheduler or dispatcher and requests a ride for a particular date and time. Demand responsive service may operate on a curb-to-curb or door-to-door basis. This service is often referred to as “dial-a-ride.”

It is important to realize that these services types are not separate and distinct and should be tailored and modified in response to specific community needs. Variables can include alternatives for user access, service combinations and adaptations, and service zones. Flexibility and creativity in developing a transit service are essential.

Funding Alternatives to Provide Transit Services

Securing funding for any public transit service is an on-going challenge. Several Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant programs, known by their section numbers 5309, 5310 and 5311, are the commonly accessed basic funding sources. Local sources include in-kind services and various dedicated taxes. Passenger fares and revenue from contracts would also be included in this category.

<b>FEDERAL</b>	Comments
FTA	
5303/5307 Urbanized Formula	Formula Allocation
5309 Capital Discretionary	Capital Fed. Earmark
5310 Elderly/Disabled	Capital: ITD/FTA
5311 Non-Urban	Operations/Administration/ITD/FTA
Welfare to Work	Application
Demonstration Grants	Application
5317 Access to Jobs	Formula
Other FTA	Application
Older Americans Act	
Title III	Regional
<b>STATE/REGIONAL</b>	
Rural Public Transportation Authority	Not enabled to seek funding.
Medicaid	State/Regional
<b>LOCAL</b>	
General Fund	In-Kind
Local Option Tax	Local Vote
Resort Tax	Local Vote
Special Districts	Council/Commission Action
Public/Private Partnerships	
<b>OTHER</b>	
Fare Revenues	Policy
Contract Services	Policy
Advertising	Policy
Other Grants	Application

The critical factor in providing needed transit services is to develop funding that allows a transit provider to operate reliably and efficiently within a set of clear goals and objectives and to accomplish long and short-range plans. Dependable resources to fund transit service are important in developing reliable service that will encourage ridership.

After several years' delay, a bill to reauthorize the nation's main surface transportation law and shape transportation investments passed in August 2005. Known as the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) is a six-year bill that stabilizes funding and includes funding increases to many transit programs.

SAFETEA-LU provides \$286.4 billion in guaranteed funding for federal surface transportation programs over six years through FY 2009, including \$52.6 billion for federal transit programs. This 46% increase over transit funding guaranteed in TEA 21 includes:

- Significant increase in Section 5310 funding for programs serving elderly and people with disabilities
- Significant increase in funding for rural transit formula program.
- Support for Job Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) funding; changed to formula funding.
- Significant reductions in the local match rates for preventive maintenance, capital purchases, and operating expenses.

Idaho allocates formula funds statewide by percentage of rural populations in each of the six highway districts. District 3 includes Valley and Adams Counties. Though Ada and Canyon counties are also included, the primary source of transit funding for the services in those counties is provided by separate urban area formula funds. Cities in West Canyon County, Parma, Greenleaf, Wilder, and Notus have tentatively been awarded service through the Section 5311 rural grant program to Valley Regional Transit Authority; however, no local match has been identified. Currently only the cities of McCall and Mountain Home benefit from the rural formula funds available.

The non-profit operator Treasure Valley Transit, using other federal revenue funds allowed as local matching dollars, supports both McCall Transit and Mountain Home Transit. Valley Transit Regional Authority (VRT) has a project to extend rural service to west in Canyon County to Parma and Caldwell, but has not secured sufficient local match for the \$150,000 it requested.

The 2006 total estimated District 3 rural bus funding is over \$800,000, and rural intercity funding available is over \$170,000, with annual increases each year. Other capital funding may be available through the Section 5310 program.

McCall, Cascade, Donnelly, New Meadows, Adams and Valley counties and Tamarack are at a critical decision point in terms of planning for transit and developing local partnerships. They must make act promptly in order to capture the necessary rural funds; delaying action will allow other projects to develop statewide and compete for un-obligated rural funds.



## **EXPANDING TRANSIT TO PROVIDE REGIONAL SERVICE**

The potential for developing transit alternatives for residents, workers, and visitors to Valley and Adams County is excellent. The need for transit for the general public has been estimated at 30,900 trips with an additional 62,100 work trips for a total demand of 93,000 passenger trips per year. Current service will provide an estimated 30,000 trips in 2005, 36% of the total demand. Triggered by the recently enacted Federal legislation, several rural transportation assistance programs are in a unique position to provide increased grant-funding support.

Service expansion is needed to provide coverage and frequency to meet the identified transit demand. The opportunities to develop private/public partnerships have been identified. These elements will significantly enhance the opportunity to expand transit in the Valley and Adams communities. An overview of the factors influencing the expansion of transit services were summarized in a presentation for the Valley Adams County Planning Partnership (VAPP) that is included in Appendix B.

A phased approach to expanding services utilizing existing resources and developing additional services has been proposed. A series of recommendation to expand transit services have been developed for three time increments: Short-term (within two years), mid-term (two to five years), and long-term (five-years plus).

These recommendations are directed to transit expansion only. Additional transportation alternatives should be addressed and included in a more comprehensive transportation plan. This would include transportation demand management, education and outreach to encourage community participation, and options such as parking management and highway enhancements such as high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes.

### Short-Term (Within Two Years)

There are three short-term opportunities to expand transit service in the study area. The first is coordinate current and possibly expand the services being provided by Tamarack Resort between Cascade/Tamarack/McCall and the local service provided by TVT in McCall. The second is to continue coordinated services in Valley County and partner with TVT to expand this service to Adams County.

The third opportunity is to improve and expand the service provided within the City of McCall. Any expansion of service will need to be predicated on maintaining existing resources and coordination of both the current and expanded services.

*Coordinate Tamarack Resort with McCall Transit*

Tamarack Resort and TVT have initiated discussions to develop a partnership that would open all Tamarack transit services to the general public and coordinate stops and schedules with McCall Transit service. By developing an agreement for mutual operations, the funds budgeted by Tamarack Resort would be available as a local match to leverage federal funding from the Section 5311 program. This would potentially increase the amount of service that could be provided. The priority objective of these coordinated services would be to provide employees and guests to communities along Highway 55 with access to not only Tamarack Resort, but also worksites and activities in McCall. While the immediate opportunity is to develop a partnership with Tamarack Resort, Brundage Ski Resort may also be a potential partner. (Management reorganization limited the opportunity for Brundage to participate in this initial effort.)

*Valley and Adams County Connector Service*

To accommodate the workforce needed to support the start-up at Tamarack Resort, transit service was provided by the resort beginning in December 2004. While focused on employees, service was open to any person wanting to come to the resort. This service has been operated daily along Highway 55 between Cascade/Donnelly/Lake Fork and McCall.

A similar service could be provided connecting Adams County residents to McCall. Initially service could originate in New Meadows, traveling 12 miles one-way to McCall. As the demand develops, service could be extended an additional 25 miles to serve Council. This would extend the trip by one hour; an alternative until ridership needs are better identified would be to organize carpools/vanpools for this area.

**Regional Connector Service:**

- Proposed Operating Hours/Schedule
  - Vehicle One                      Extend Connector Service to Adams County
  - New Service to be provided by McCall Transit
  - 8 hours Service Daily, Seven Days/Week
  - Southbound: Two Morning and Two Afternoon Trips
  - 6 AM, 8 AM                      3 PM, 5 PM
  - Approximate Round Trip Transit Time: Two Hours
  - Council/New Meadows    25 miles            30 minutes
  - New Meadows/McCall    12 miles            30 minutes
  - McCall/New Meadows    12 miles            30 minutes
  - New Meadows/Council    25 miles            30 minutes

Vehicle Two Connector Service to Valley County

Current Service provided by Tamarack Resorts

Based on 2004 Schedule

Northbound: Two Morning and Two Afternoon Trips

6:15 AM, 8:00 AM Return Approximately 5:45 Pm

Approximate Round Trip Transit Time: One and ½ Hour

Cascade/Donnelly 16 miles 20 minutes

Donnelly/McCall 13 miles 20 minutes

McCall/Donnelly 13 miles 20 minutes

Donnelly/Cascade 16 miles 20 minutes

- All services connect and coordinate with existing McCall Transit
- A preliminary budget was developed based on TVT estimated operating cost of \$45/hour of service. This budget will be adjusted based on local conditions. For example, local school bus driver wages were recently increased due to a tight labor market. TVT will most likely need to match this increase in addition to providing a benefit package if full- time drivers are hired. It is anticipated service will be provided with a mid-day break, seven days a week year round. Days/Hours of service are estimated at maximum; summer service hours are generally less that winter hours.

Hours/Day	8
Days/Year	360
\$/Hours of Service	\$ 45.00
Adams County Connector	\$ 129,600
Valley County Connector	\$ 129,600
TOTAL	\$ 259,200
ESTIMATED LOCAL MATCH	\$ 130,000
(No more than 50%)	

- The local match estimate reflects the requirements of the FTA Section 5311 Rural Public Transportation funding program. The actual match required will be based on the final budget elements subject to the following match ratios:

Category	Federal	Local
Capital	92%	8%
Operating	57.5%	42.5%
Administration	80%	20%

### *Expanded Service in McCall*

McCall Transit currently provides an hour loop connecting the west and east sides of town crossing through the main downtown shopping and business community twice per hour. While specific stops are identified, the option of a flag stop allows riders to flag the bus anywhere along the route where it is safe for the vehicle to stop.

Two disadvantages of this hour loop route are the need for someone to travel the entire loop to get back to their starting point and the frequency interval (one-hour) between buses.

A solution would be to add a second vehicle to the system. The two vehicles would shorten the ride time with the frequency between vehicles be reduced to thirty minutes. Alternative operating scenarios could be:

- One vehicle operated clockwise; second vehicle operates counterclockwise.
- One vehicle serves “east side” loop; second vehicle operated “west side” loop. Vehicles meet at central downtown location.

A review of the current route system would also be appropriate. The new Deinhard-Boydston Connection has been completed since the route was developed and there may be more advantageous routings available. In addition, the loop to Lick Creek Road may be better served “on demand” only as opposed to include on each loop.

Estimated cost for this additional bus would be approximately \$100,000 annually with an estimated local match requirement of \$50,000. The addition of the second vehicle would extend opportunities to provide transit service to accommodate local cultural centers and events such as the historic settlement at Roseberry housing the Valley County Historical Museum.

### Mid-Term (Two To Five Years)

The short-term transit services expansions recommended can be accomplished by developing the existing services. Based on the success of these efforts, additional improvements may be considered:

#### Regional Service

- Extend service to Council in Adams County.
- Review other locations for service needs.
- Review need for evening service.
- Incorporate other alternatives identified in Comprehensive Transportation Plans.

#### Local Service

- Identify/develop permanent transfer location in McCall for regional/local service.
- Review need for circulator service in Cascade and New Meadows
- Review need for evening service.

As important, the partners in the region need to begin a dialogue about forming a Regional Public Transportation Authority. The success of the service connecting riders from New Meadows through McCall to Cascade will have been established and the partnerships of public and private operators developed. Additional services needs can be identified and the management needs can be clarified. For example, TVT, based in Nampa, will be providing management services for both the McCall and Adams County service. Alternative organizational options can be reviewed at this point.

The State of Idaho provides formation of a Regional Public Transportation Authority (RTA) to design, build and operate public transportation systems in rural communities. The formation and structure of an RTA are subject to local vote. A major drawback is that the current statute does not provide a mechanism for new local funding for RTA services.

Several other Idaho communities, including Ada, Canyon, Blaine, Bonneville and Kootenai Counties have expressed an interest in amending the enabling legislation to allow for local voters approval of new local taxes to fund public transportation. Community leaders should participate in discussions on a statewide level to review this situation.

#### Long-Term (Five-Years Plus)

As service needs develop and are identified, new and expanded service should be considered. In addition, other alternative transportation strategies may be appropriate. This could include:

- Extend RTA to neighboring counties
- Develop transit support facilities such as bus storage/maintenance facility, administrative office, transfer centers.
- Develop park and ride system
- Other options for improving transportation system:
  - Develop McCall Parking management program
  - Develop HOV lanes on Highway 55

## NEXT STEPS

The need for new and expanded transit services to support community and economic growth has been established and, as discussed previously, recent Federal legislation increased funding available for grant assistance to support rural transit services. Therefore, it is realistic to expand services in the near-term if the community is in agreement to proceed.

Near term tasks to implement transit expansion for Valley and Adams Counties include:

<b>Time</b>	<b>Partner:</b>	<b>Tasks:</b>
Jan- June 2006	McCall Transit/TVT	Coordinate existing transit schedules with Tamarack/Other Resorts. (Meeting Dec. 8 <sup>th</sup> for this task) Develop budget for adding one vehicle for Adams Connector. Discuss possible expansion of service in McCall; reduce loop to 1/2 hour. Develop budget for McCall Council review. Submit Section 5311 grant application for FFY 2006-07 to incorporate expanded service.
	Tamarack Resort Other Resorts	Develop information about cost to operate current service and potential for coordinating with expanded service. Extend coordination to other resorts/partners as identified.
	ITD/ Public Transportation	Identify surplus Section 5311 funding available for FFY 2005-06. Resolve working relationship of McCall/TVT and Tamarack; develop protocol to use coordinated service as source of matching funds. Review Grant Application for FFY 2006-07 funding for increased service levels.
	VAPP	Continue dialogue between cities/county to identify transit needs. Identify additional partnerships/sources of local match.
June- Dec. 2006	McCall Transit/TVT	Implement Adams/New Meadows to McCall service, 12-06 If approved, add second vehicle to McCall Transit.
	Tamarack Resort Other Resorts	Continue coordinating service with TVT/McCall Transit. Develop operating plan for Winter Season – 2006-07
	ITD/ Public Transportation	Identify additional grant opportunities. Formalize agreement with TVT/Tamarack to provide coordinated transit service.
	VAPP	Consider options for Regional Transportation Authority development. Identify local match resources.

## APPENDIX A

### Demographic Information/Transit Needs Estimate

#### R & R Method

This method is used to project age/mobility data to calculate demand. Census 2000 provides data segregated by age and disabled/mobility limited.

Model Form:

General Population Trips = Population under 64, w/o mobility limitations  
x 1 trip per person per year (on average)

Elderly/Disabled Trips = Pop. 64+ and pop. under 64 with mobility limits  
x 4 trips per person per year (on average)

#### Survey Research Method (Developed for Mesa County, CO 1992)

This model was designed to predict local service in small urban areas with surrounding rural areas. The data needed to calculate the demand using this model is available from the Census 2000.

Model Form:

General Population Trips =  
Population under 65, w/o mobility limitations  
x 6.5% of that population use transit  
x 0.02 round trips per day per person  
x 2 one way trips per round trips  
x 365 days per year

Elderly Population Trips = Population 65+, w/o mobility limitations  
x 7.6% of that population use transit  
x 0.04 round trips per day per person  
x 2 one-way trips per round trip  
x 365 days per year

Disabled Population Trips = Mobility limited population all ages  
x 80% of that population use transit  
x 0.03 round trips per day per person  
x 2 one-way trips per round trips  
x 365 days per year

Employee Transit Use Method

This model predicts only work trips. An additional model is needed to predict general demand or elderly/disabled demand. The employee data is available and the assumption was made that there are two daily work round trips on transit. This assumption can be adjusted if local data are available and indicate a significant difference from this assumption. In this instance, the Census 2000 data for transit ridership was used.

Model Form:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Total annual one way person trips for work} &= \text{Total Employees} \\ &\quad \times .855\% \text{ employees use transit/day} \\ &\quad \times 2 \text{ one-way trips per day} \\ &\quad \times 250 \text{ work days/year} \\ &\quad (260 \text{ weekdays}-10 \text{ holidays}) \end{aligned}$$

Note: Employee Transit Use based on non-urban workplace transit ridership profile obtained during Census 2000.